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By MIKE CARMEL

Behind some successful women there is an understanding husband. But behind others there is the hard-driving business sense too rarely associated with the "gentler" sex.

This proves itself in the San Gabriel Valley where women have risen to key slots in government and have taken a lively part in the Valley's burgeoning industrial growth.

Take, for example, Mrs. Floretta Lauber, an Arcadia woman recently elected to her second term as president of the West San Gabriel Valley Planning Council.

"I enjoy bridge, but I couldn't stand it five days a week," said Mrs. Lauber.

A competent speaker with managerial abilities, Mrs. Lauber got her start in leadership after she was hired as assembler and calibrator for an electronics firm. Although she was hired as the first subject in an experiment to see how women could handle a job

FLORETTA LAUBER

reserved to men, Mrs. Lauber quickly proved she had leadership qualities and was promoted to supervisor of a department which included as many as 15 technicians — many of them men.

Coolly organizing her time so she could meet all commitments, Mrs. Lauber raised a son, keeps an immaculate house and a firm grip on developments which might affect the future of the San Gabriel Valley.

Admittedly in love with her community, Mrs. Lauber, 42, has substituted politics and planning for the business world where she often found men resentful of the position she occupied.

Her husband Harry is credited with encouraging her community endeavors, Mrs. Lauber said.

"He's one of my staunchest backers. There have been times when I would have simply bowed out if he hadn't urged me to stick with it."

And she's glad.

"I've learned a great deal about the world. I've received a feeling of self-satisfaction and accomplishment that only comes from being involved in life. I suppose there's a certain excitement to politics.

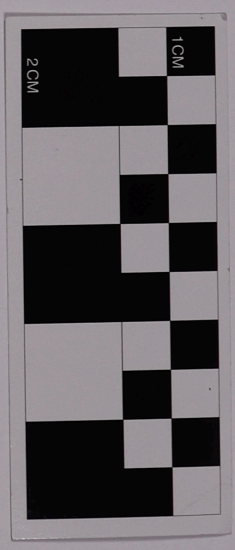
"It gives you a certain opportunity to communicate with people and I enjoy that very much. If you love your community as I do, you should take the opportunity to do something that will help it."

Mrs. Lauber says women can make a serious mistake by confining themselves to domestic chores — and at the same time prospective employers can make a similar mistake by limiting their hiring to male applicants.

"I don't think a woman could be hired simply because of her sex," said Mrs. Lauber, "but if she can cut the mustard —give her an opportunity."

Her advice to other women:

"Don't just bury yourself in the kitchen or play bridge all the time."

Like other women in influential positions, Mrs. Lauber reads exhaustively and studies developments which may apply to her activities.

And as a well organized housewife, Mrs. Lauber does her shopping by the week—a real time saver.